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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/702,206	11/04/2003	David M. Stravitz	03570/LH	7117
1933	7590	12/22/2005	EXAMINER	
FRISHAUF, HOLTZ, GOODMAN & CHICK, PC 220 Fifth Avenue 16TH Floor NEW YORK, NY 10001-7708			NOVOSAD, JENNIFER ELEANORE	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3634

DATE MAILED: 12/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/702,206	STRAVITZ, DAVID M.	
	Examiner Jennifer E. Novosad	Art Unit 3634	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2003 and 20 October 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/14/03; 09/03/04; and 10/20/05</u> | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office action is in response to the application filed November 3, 2003 and the election (without traverse) filed October 20, 2005.

Election/Restriction

Applicant's election without traverse of species (a), i.e., Figures 1-8, in the reply filed on October 20, 2005 is acknowledged. The examiner respectfully agrees with applicant's indication that claims 1-9 are readable on the elected species and that claims 1-4 are generic.

Thus, claims 10-28 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Abstract

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure. The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "said compartments" in line 9. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. *Thus*, the structural relationship between the elements is unclear.

The language of the recitation "receivable of objects are formed" in line 12 of claim 1 renders the claim indefinite thereby making it unclear exactly what is being set forth.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S.

Design Patent No. Des. 277,969 (Bustos '969).

Bustos '969 shows at least three substantially planar walls including a front wall, a rear wall and a plurality of dividers walls defined therebetween such that compartments are formed between adjacent ones of the walls and are staggered; side walls (see Figures 3 and 5) connected

to at least three of the walls such that the side walls having a lower edge substantially coplanar with a lower edge of the front wall and being arranged to enable a bottom the compartments to be positioned at varied heights (see Figure 3); a first stepped bottom wall connected to at least three walls and at least one of the side walls (see Figure 3) having upper edge portions connected to the first bottom wall; ledges extending above the upper edge portions of the side walls; the side (as shown in Figure 3) is open thereby enabling objects placed in the compartments to extend laterally outward of the respective compartment; and the first bottom wall includes a plurality of bottom panels arranged at different heights and closure panels connected adjacent the bottom panels.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bustos '969 as applied to claims 1, 3-5, and 7 above, and further in view of U.S. Design Patent No. Des. 381,362 (Meyer '362).

Bustos '969 shows the sorter as advanced above.

The claim differs from Bustos '969 in requiring the first bottom wall to include an arcuate portion and a substantially planar portion forward of the arcuate portion defining the bottom of a compartment.

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Meyer '362 shows a sorter having a plurality of compartments formed between adjacent substantially parallel walls and a first bottom wall including an arcuate portion and a substantially planar portion forward of the arcuate portion defining the bottom of a compartment.

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the bottom wall of Bustos '969 with an arcuate portion and a planar portion, as shown by Meyer '362, for ease in viewing of objects placed therein.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., In re Berg, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); In re Goodman, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Longi, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); In re Van Ornum, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); In re Vogel, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and In re Thorington, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-9 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claim of U.S. Design Patent No. D495,007. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it

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would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that objects placed in the sorter of D495,007 would extend laterally outward of a compartment thereby increasing ease in use to the consumer since objects would be more easily accessible.

Claims 1-5 and 7-9 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claim of U.S. Design Patent No. D497,391. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that objects placed in the sorter of D497,391 would extend laterally outward of a compartment thereby increasing ease in use to the consumer since objects would be more easily accessible.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer E. Novosad whose telephone number is 571-272-6832. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 5:30am-4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard E. Chilcot can be reached on 571-272-6777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jennifer E. Novosad

Primary Examiner

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December 19, 2005